

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE
FOR ESTABLISHING A
SUCCESSFUL FACULTY
COUNCIL
IN YOUR SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to help those who have not established a Faculty Council in their school and have questions about developing procedures which will lead to its successful implementation. It should also be useful to schools which already have an established Faculty Council but are looking for methods of enhancing its effectiveness. This guide endeavors to present a description of the benefits a successful Council can bring to a school, some guidelines on organizational structure, suggestions for setting up process and procedure as well as developing an effective means of regular communication with the faculty in order to keep them informed and involved in the functioning of the Council.

In addition, it contains a partial list of the types of items Faculty Councils have considered. It will give the reader some idea of the breadth and variety of concerns which are within the province of the Council. Each of these items were successfully resolved. Also included is a sample agenda and a sample report to the faculty and staff. These are extracts from actual meeting minutes.

It is strongly suggested that a copy of the **Guidelines for Faculty Councils** be obtained by calling TABCO at 828-6403 before you attempt to establish a Faculty Council in your school. Even schools with established Faculty Councils should have a copy of these **Guidelines** for reference and clarification. Also, all members of the Faculty Council, as well as all faculty members, should be encouraged to read the current **Master Agreement** in order to be clear about the role and function of the Faculty Council. It is important that both the Faculty Council and the administrative team follow the contract in all actions and decisions made by and with the Faculty Council. Remember that a TABCO staff member is available to come to your school to help in the establishing and functioning of your Faculty Council. A TABCO staff member is also available to meet with the Faculty Council or with both the Faculty Council and the administrative team whenever their help may be needed or desired.

ORGANIZING A FACULTY COUNCIL

1. The TABCO representative or other interested parties should meet with the teachers and support staff to explain the organization, structure, and functions of the Faculty Council. The discussion should include the Faculty Council's areas of authority and responsibility, as well as its rights, as outlined in the **Master Agreement** and the **Guidelines for Faculty Councils**.

2. The **Master Agreement** is a legally binding contract and adherence to its terms is not optional for local administrators or faculties. The **Master Agreement** gives sole authority to TABCO to set the terms of membership on the Faculty Council, the organization of the Council, and its meeting process.

3. Membership on the Council should be by an election as directed in the **Master Agreement** and the **Guidelines for Faculty Councils**, copies of which are available from TABCO. The TABCO chairperson is an automatic member of the Council, functions in the same capacity as elected members, and may also serve as chairperson. Length of terms can be as agreed upon by the local site. For example, a school may elect to have staggered two year terms in order to provide continuity within the Council.

4. The Council should meet with the administrative team to explain the process by which the Council intends to function, as well as the specific areas of authority and involvement given to it in the **Master Agreement**. The two groups should establish a regular date for meeting together, the process by which each group provides their agenda prior to the regular meeting times, and to clarify the procedure the Council will use to inform the faculty and staff about the results of each meeting. (See Initial Letter to the Administration.)

5. The Council should meet with the faculty and staff to explain the procedures agreed upon by the Faculty Council and the administrative team. The Council should also explain the procedures available to faculty and staff for bringing issues of concern to the Council. The Council should make it absolutely clear that the complete anonymity of individuals or groups bringing issues to the Council will be maintained and that no matters discussed by the Council or the administrative team will be in the general Council report if their publication is inappropriate.

6. The Council should meet once a month in a session open to all members of the faculty and staff, with the exception of the members of the administrative team, interested in attending or who might have an issue they would like the Council to address in its next meeting with the administrative team. It is the responsibility of the Council to take all issues to the joint meeting regardless of the feelings of

individual Council members. However, the Council can refuse to include items on the Council/administrative team agenda which are outside the purview of Faculty Councils as defined in the **Master Agreement**. Questions about the Council's decisions can be directed to the local TABCO UniServ Representative.

7. The Council may meet separately in order to establish the agenda and develop the presentation strategy for the combined meeting as well as develop possible solutions for each item.

8. A written agenda should be presented by both sides (the Faculty Council and the administrative team) several days prior to the regularly scheduled joint monthly meeting in order to give each side the opportunity to gather information and prepare responses. Topics not on the previously submitted agenda should not be discussed at the meeting except as emergency items by the agreement of both groups.

9. In the joint meetings, a Council member should initiate the discussion on each item presented by the Council, and an administrative team member each of those items submitted by its team, in order to have the topic and its perspective clearly before the body prior to beginning a general discussion.

10. All items need not be resolved in each meeting. Each group may need to gather additional information or take time to study the proposals of the other. Follow-up meetings could be scheduled before the next regular meeting time if it was felt to be necessary, or resolutions could be decided upon at the next regular meeting, whichever is appropriate.

11. The Council should understand that it has the full resources of TABCO to help in gathering information or seeking resolution and that the Association will act on its behalf when asked, or where appropriate.

*****INITIAL LETTER TO THE ADMINISTRATION*****

TO: THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM
FROM: THE FACULTY COUNCIL
RE: PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY COUNCIL MEETINGS
DATE:

1. In the Faculty Council organizational meeting on **DATE**, **NAME** was elected chairperson and **NAME** was elected as the secretary for the Faculty Council for the year ending June 31, 199?
2. The Faculty Council has reviewed the current **Master Agreement** which states the areas of authority of the Council in the following sections:

ARTICLE III: Sections 3.6 through 3.6.6
ARTICLE IV: Sections 4.1, 4.3, 4.5 through 4.7.1
ARTICLE VIII: Sections 8.1 through 8.4
ARTICLE XI: Section 11.1

(these articles and numbers may change from year to year, be sure to check your current Master Agreement for the appropriate articles and sections)

Also included in the areas of authority of the Faculty Council would be any laws, powers, authority, or limitations of authority which may be applicable in the current laws, bylaws, and policies of the Baltimore County School Board and/or the Maryland State Board of Education.

3. The Faculty Council would like to schedule, at a mutually agreeable time, regular monthly meetings with the entire administrative team in the expectation that regular meetings will give a valuable structure to the Faculty Council/administrative team proceedings.
4. Except under unforeseen and extenuating emergency circumstances, the Council will provide the administrative team with an agenda several days in advance of meeting times for all joint meetings of the Council and the administrative team. The Council would expect the same courtesy from the administrative team. In this manner each side should have time to research possible solutions to issues prior to the actual meetings and final resolutions should be able to be achieved at the time of the actual meetings. This process should help effect the timely resolution of issues of concern.
5. All communications with the Faculty Council should be made by the principal to the FC Chairperson.
6. Except where appropriate, no decisions will be made by the FC Chairperson without consultation with the entire Faculty Council.
7. The Faculty Council secretary will provide the Council and the administrative team with copies of the written minutes of each meeting. If the Council agrees as to the correctness of the minutes, the FC Chairperson will initial them. If the administrative team agrees to the contents of the minutes, the principal will also initial them. After the minutes have been initialed by both parties they will be copied and distributed to all faculty and support staff.

MEMO TO FACULTY: MONTHLY MEETINGS

Month/day/year

To: All faculty and staff
From: The Faculty Council
Re: Monthly Meetings]

It has been agreed that the Faculty Council and the administrative team will meet on the **day/date** of each month to discuss issues of mutual concern.

The open meeting at which the Faculty Council will listen to requests to have specific items included in the agenda for the monthly meetings will be held on the **day/day** each month at **time** in room **number**.

If you have a question, concern, issue, problem, etc.,... you are invited to attend the meeting and discuss it with the Faculty Council. If you wish, you may instead discuss your issue with any member of the Council and have that person present it at the meeting for you. You may also submit any item in writing if you would prefer. Remember, the Council always adheres to strict rules of confidentiality.

Reminders of the meetings will be placed in the Friday Bulletin the week prior to the open meeting each month. If a conflict in scheduling should occur, an announcement of the changed date for the open meeting will be made in advance.

Please let us know what we can do to serve you!

ACTUAL FACULTY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Clarification of rules by which the Faculty Council will operate.
2. Administrative lunch detention policy and the adverse effects upon lunch duty personnel and the student body.
3. Improving existing school discipline policies and making them more effective.
4. Discussion of the purchase of an air conditioner for the faculty work area on the second floor.
5. Clarification about the policies regarding the availability of supplies and materials under the new system of ordering.
6. Selecting a date for the Faculty Council and administrative team joint meetings.
7. Request that a single custodian be responsible for keeping the faculty work room supplied with paper.
8. Request for a heavy duty high quality hole punch to be provided for the faculty work room.
9. Discussion about the reactions of the student body to what they perceive as meaningless or unenforced threats issued over the P.A.
10. Discussion of poor interpersonal relationships being exhibited by a member of the support staff.
11. Discussion of concerns expressed by the faculty about the use and distribution of various profit producing vending machines and the disbursement of profits from those machines.
12. Faculty recommendation that we add a canned juice vending machine in the hall next to the new coke machine or in another convenient area.
13. The faculty has requested that a thorough review and investigation of fund raising by the Student Council, classes, and other organizations be initiated to determine if the present system is the most efficient one available.
14. Faculty request that a new, heavy duty paper cutter be provided in the faculty work room.
15. Faculty concern for class coverages out of their areas for which they may not be properly prepared.
16. Faculty concern about lesson plans for classes they cover which may not be sufficient to maintain student interest and discipline.
17. Faculty request for a discussion of the specific responsibilities of chaperones regarding the collection of and accounting for monies at various events.
18. There have been a number of complaints about the shortage of the type of transparency material needed for the copy machines. The Faculty Council has determined that these materials are not available because all of the on-site supplies have been consumed. We would like to know if there are any alternative sources of supply available such as a "special requisition." Earlier this year we were informed that supplies would all be in by November. Will a new supply of these transparencies be included in this shipment?
19. The Faculty Council would like a report on the progress which has been made on question #5 from the October meeting, to wit: 5. The Faculty Council requests a discussion of the specific responsibilities of chaperones in relation to the collection of and accounting for monies at various events.
20. Discussion of the need to take steps to combat the increasing level of unexcused latenesses to school.
21. The Faculty Council requests an update on the earlier issue of studying the fund raising process and a report on the progress made regarding that study.
22. Request that the **Master Agreement** requirement that all teachers who float be supplied with adequate carts be met and that the carts not come from those used by the AV Department.
23. Discussion of strategies to improve student behavior including the need for increased administrative expectations of the students.
24. Request that next year's bell schedule be changed to eliminate the hour long period seven class length by making the length of each class the same.
25. We recently reached an agreement on the manner in which admissions to paid athletic events would be handled. On Tuesday, December 6th two versions of this agreement were published, one by agreement of

the Faculty Council and the administrative team and one by the athletic department. We would like to know why this happened and if the athletic department has been told that its perception is correct.

26. Suggestion for a new procedure for sending notes from homeroom to their point of origin when the person requested is absent.

27. Request that the administration discuss with the Guidance Department the need to follow its own procedure regarding the handing out of conference passes.

28. Suggestion that the Guidance Department develop a procedure to explain to students how to request teacher letters of recommendation in the most efficient manner for teachers.

29. Request that the Guidance secretarial staff type letters of recommendation written for students by teachers if requested.

30. Request that the "IN" and "OUT" doors in the front office be switched to eliminate an existing safety hazard.

31. Discussion of an issue dealing with the confidentiality of student information as distributed by the Guidance Department.

32. Clarification of policy regarding the distribution of report cards to released time and early dismissal students.

33. Request for administration control of student CB powered speakers on the parking lot in the morning and at dismissal.

34. Clarification of the 10% and the 20% rule regarding grades.

35. Request that students who fail a course be assigned to a different teacher when repeating a course if possible.

36. Request that the heat be on when teachers are still in the building during partial school days.

37. Discussion regarding the number of formal observations by the principal during an evaluation period and the possibility of reducing them.

38. Clarification on the policy regarding the use of teachers to cover when substitutes are not available and a request that administrators be included in this procedure.

39. Suggestions for increasing the number of substitutes in the pool.

40. Request for an update on the progress of the discussions with Guidance regarding the issuance of passes.

41. Evaluation of the cost of photocopying material by students in the school library.

42. Request for an update on the progress made regarding traffic safety and parking problems in the school since the death of one of our students.

43. Response to a request by the principal that the Faculty Council poll the faculty for suggestions for the number, type, and time of Faculty Meetings for the upcoming school year in accordance with Article X: Section 10.12 of the **Master Agreement**.

**** SAMPLE AGENDA ONLY ****

To: Faculty Council and Administrative Team Members

From: The Faculty Council Secretary

Re: Agenda for the *month* Meeting

Information: The combined meeting will be held on *month/day/year* in room *number* at *time*

Items for discussion from the Faculty Council:

1. There is a feeling among the faculty that alternative possibilities for Student Council and class fund raisers should be explored to determine if the present system is the most efficient and effective one available.

Possible resolution: A procedure be mutually established by the Faculty Council and the administrative team along with appropriate Student Council and class personnel to investigate fund raising options and make a report with recommendations to the entire faculty.

2. In order to facilitate the preparation of materials and conserve paper whenever possible, teachers are requesting a heavy-duty paper cutter be installed in the faculty workroom.

3. Many faculty members were disturbed by the poor behavior of students in the last assembly.

Possible resolution: The Assembly Committee will meet with interested faculty and an administrative representative to develop strategies designed to improve student behavior in future assemblies.

4. Faculty are concerned about the unequal length of the day's periods.

Possible resolution: Next year's bell schedule be changed using the format provided by the Math Department to make each period equal in length.

5. Various faculty covering classes have found the lesson plans left by the teacher are not sufficient and are not designed to maintain educational progress and assist in the control of student behavior. While this may not be possible in emergency situations, under normal conditions lesson plans should conform to these principles.

Possible resolution: Teachers be reminded of these expectations in the next faculty meeting and on the Daily Bulletin.

6. Teachers and others in the school are expected to take reasonable precautions to maintain the confidentiality of student information. These precautions are not always taken.

Possible resolution: Teachers be reminded in the next faculty meeting and on the Daily Bulletin of the need to maintain the confidentiality of student information and have procedures recommended to them for accomplishing this goal.

7. The Council would like to address the need to improve the level of interpersonal relationships being exhibited by a member of the support staff to the detriment of the school program.

8. It has been brought to the attention of the Faculty Council that there are differences in the number of formal observations held at this school as compared to other schools in the county. The Council would like to review with the administrative team the BCPS policy, rationale, and requirements pertaining to observations.

Possible resolution: To develop a process for observations at this school which conforms to the BCPS requirements and eliminates unneeded observations.

9. The Council would like an update on the progress being made on the traffic safety and parking problems at the school. The Council would also welcome suggestions as to the exact steps the faculty and the Council can take to assist the administration in the solution of these problems.

**** SAMPLE REPORT ONLY ****

To: The Faculty and Staff

From: The Faculty Council Secretary

Re: Report of the month meeting

Roll Call:

Present: Members of the Faculty Council and the administrative team present at the meeting are listed here.

Absent: Members of each group who are absent and the reason for absence are listed here. (Ex: John Smith, personal business or Jane Doe, coaching or Bob Jones, Board meeting)

Item 1 (Items listed here are from the Agenda of that month's meeting and are reprinted exactly as they were presented on the Faculty Council/Administrative Team Agenda with the exception of those items relating to individuals which may be inappropriate to publish.)

The faculty has requested that a thorough review and investigation of fund raising by the Student Council and the classes be instituted. There is a feeling among faculty members that alternative possibilities should be explored to determine if the present system is the most efficient and effective one available.

Resolution:

It was agreed by both groups that this needs to be investigated in all areas of the sales and distribution of materials in and/or through the school. We need to study the needs of all groups such as the Student Government, classes, clubs, etc. and the best ways in which these needs can be met.

An investigation of the various methods of fund raising in use throughout the county, the success or failure of these methods, and the application of these methods to our school and area will need to be conducted by the administration and involved faculty. A meeting with the sponsors of various

activities will be held later this year to consider all aspects of these issues and determine potential solutions.

(Note: A study by all classes and sponsors was conducted and the current fund raising system of candy sales in the school was eliminated.)

Item 2

The faculty requests that a new, heavy duty paper cutter be provided in the faculty work room.

Resolution:

The principal has agreed to a new paper cutter for the faculty workroom. A search for a suitable unit is now being made and the paper cutter should be available in the near future.

(Note: A new paper cutter was installed in the workroom within 3 days of the meeting.)

Item 3

Many faculty members were disturbed by the poor behavior of students at the last assembly. The Faculty Council would like to discuss strategies to improve student response to future assemblies.

Resolution

The principal agreed that the students did display unacceptable behavior at the last assembly. A meeting of the Assembly Committee and representatives of the Administration and Faculty Council preceded this meeting. The following steps were taken immediately in an effort to diminish this problem.

1. The seating arrangement in the auditorium was changed.
2. The number of students in the balcony was reduced and the seating arrangement in the balcony was changed.
3. Teachers were asked to sit in the audience among the students.
4. Students who misbehave are to be immediately sent to the office where an administrator will be waiting to deal with them.

Item 4

The Council requests that next year's bell schedule include a change to eliminate the hour long length of period seven. It is desired that all periods be of equal length.

Resolution

The principal agreed with this proposal.

Item 5

Lesson plans provided for coverage should be designed to maintain educational progress and assist in the control of student behavior. While this may not be possible in emergency situations, under normal conditions they should be sufficient.

The Faculty Council requests that the Administration remind everyone to provide sufficient coverage plans under normal conditions.

Resolution

The principal agrees that lesson plans should be sufficient and appropriate and will remind Department Chairpersons to discuss this with their departments.

If you have a class to cover in a non-emergency situation and the lesson plan is not sufficient, please take the following steps:

1. discuss the problem with the teacher involved if you feel this is possible.
2. discuss the problem with the Department Chairperson involved.
3. discuss the problem with an Administrator.
4. discuss the problem with a member of the Faculty Council.

Item 6

The Council would like to discuss an issue dealing with the confidentiality of student information.

Resolution

The Council and Administration agree that the maintenance of confidentiality of student information is of extreme importance. The

principal will instruct all faculty and staff to send all confidential information in a sealed envelope. This will alert teachers to the nature of the message enclosed by clearly separating it from the multitude of papers delivered each week.

Item 7

There are differences in the number of formal observations held at this school as compared to other schools in the county. The Council would like to discuss the rationale and the requirements pertaining to observations in light of improving efficiency, cutting costs, and diminishing the pressure on tenured highly able teachers.

Resolution

It was agreed by all parties that the evaluation procedure requires a minimum of 2 observations per evaluation period (2 years). However, no maximum number of observations is specified. It is up to the discretion of the principal and supervisor to have more than 2 observations per evaluation period. Limiting the number of observations would eliminate unnecessary work on the part of a number of individuals. Thus, people with a "very good" or "excellent" rating on their last evaluation will only need two observations on their evaluation year. Those with a "satisfactory" rating will be the same unless they request additional observations. Those with a rating below "satisfactory" will work out an observation schedule with the principal.

Item 8

The Council would like an update on the progress being made on traffic safety and parking problems at the school. The Council would also welcome suggestions as the exact steps the faculty can take to assist the administration in the solution of these problems.

Resolution

A letter will be sent to the faculty and staff on March 15th which will update this situation and explain the proposed changes which include a parking lot expansion. When the projected

changes are made, we may have some problems as there may be more cars than spaces available for them. However, we feel that the school has a moral obligation to take all possible steps to prevent any further injuries or deaths to students.

What the faculty can do to help the situation:

1. It may become necessary to enforce "BY PERMIT ONLY" parking on the campus. When this is done ALL cars without permits will be ticketed by the county police. Please be sure that you have permits affixed to your vehicles. Permits are readily available from **name** in the office.
2. When these changes are made, students may have complaints or concerns. Please counsel them to address these concerns through the proper channels. Listen to the students and suggest that they use the student government as a forum or that they go directly to an administrator with their problem.
3. Continue to write letters to state and county officials. This will maintain political pressure on them to carry out the present plans. Also write to the Board of Education and to the superintendent stressing the need for these improvements to protect the student's safety.

Items for discussion - submitted by the administrative team

Item 1

Discussion of the potential problems associated with the implementation of after school detention.

Resolution

As requested by the Faculty Council, the administrative team has discontinued "lunch detention" as a punishment for non-lunch related discipline problems. The Administration is instituting, and will supervise, an after school detention program to be used in place of the lunch detention.

In setting up this program, several problems have become apparent. The first of these is that we serve such a large geographical area that in some cases the removal of transportation may provide

an undue hardship on a particular family. A second problem may be the recalcitrant parent who refuses to provide transportation needed for the program. A third problem is the single parent family wherein the parent must work during the time when the student serving detention needs to be picked up and cannot provide transportation.

Therefore, it is necessary for the faculty to realize that if after school detention is to become one of the tools used to maintain discipline within the school, the administrative team must be able to consider all aspects of the situation and use the most effective means available to them. As is the case in the classroom, the most effective means of "behavior modification" must be determined for each individual.

The Faculty Council expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Administrative Team to be highly visible in the halls and during lunch shifts. This has certainly been helpful in improving our "proximity control" of the students.

Approved by:

Faculty Council Chairperson: *initials*

Principal: initials

notes:

This copy of the minutes of the meeting should be sent to all faculty and staff. It is most important that the Faculty Council keep the entire faculty and staff informed about all of its dealings with the Administrative Team. If these groups are not kept well informed, there is a tendency for their members to feel that the Council may be working in its own interest and support for the Council will diminish.

Please notice that in the minutes sent to the faculty and staff there was no mention of the personnel matter which appeared as number 7 on the Agenda for the meeting. While it may occasionally be appropriate for the Council to discuss individual personnel if their behavior impacts the educational program, it is almost never appropriate for the entire faculty and staff to know about those discussions. In these situations, a member of the Council can go to the person initiating the discussion of the issue, if known, and

tell them privately about the results of the discussion.

SOMETIMES BEING PERSISTENT HELPS

The following notes depict a series of discussions on a single item held between the Faculty Council and the Administrative Team held over a period of three months. There were several discussions leading to an agreement. The Physical Education Department then published a letter giving teachers a different resolution to the problem. The final report indicates that the original agreement between the Faculty Council and the Administrative Team was the one implemented.

1. Agenda item from the month of October

5. The faculty requests a discussion of the specific responsibilities of chaperones in relation to the collection of and accounting for money at various athletic events.

Resolution

Faculty members have been asked to assist by collecting money at athletic events which are a prescribed part of the school program. The administrative team would prefer not to require this of teachers. However, there are few acceptable alternatives available at the present time and we are not optimistic that teachers can be released from these responsibilities.

A major effort will be made to radically improve the collection of funds by taking the following steps.

1. A standard operating procedure will be developed, in writing, and distributed to all teachers. The process and procedure will be clearly delineated and adhered to.
2. The teachers with the responsibilities for the sale of tickets will have this as their sole responsibility for the event and will not be expected to serve in several capacities at the same time.

1. Agenda item for the month of November

2. The Faculty Council would like a report on the progress which has been made on Question 5 from the October meeting.

Resolution

Name held a meeting with all of the staff members who have the responsibility for collecting funds at various athletic activities. Written directions have been given to each of these people. If you were unable

to attend the meeting, please see **name** at your convenience for this information.

All coaches of teams will be informed that no students on any teams will be allowed into games where an entrance fee is charged unless:

1. The coach of the team accompanies the team to the event, enters with the team, and remains with the team in a supervisory role until the end of the event.
2. The team members pay regular admission to the event and therefore are treated as any other student.

There was also a discussion of the need to develop parent assistants for these events. It is felt that this would be good for the students, the games, and the school. Discussions will be held with the coaching staff and the Athletic Department in an attempt to establish this program.

3. Agenda item for the month of December

6. The Faculty Council and the administrative team recently reached an agreement on the matter in which admissions to paid athletic events would be handled. On Tuesday, December 6th, two versions of this agreement were published. One of these was the resolution made by the Faculty Council and the administrative team and the other was a version developed by the Athletic Department. Which policy statement is correct? The Council believes that the one published by the Faculty Council was an accurate rendition of the agreement and it is at a loss to understand the unilateral change which occurred.

Resolution

It was agreed that the resolution to this problem as published by the Faculty Council was accurate. If a coach wishes to bring students to a game, the coach must identify the students, have their hand stamped, and remain with them as their chaperone. Unless this is done, the students must pay admission to the game if they wish to attend.

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